

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A cable identification system comprising:
 - 2 a cable; and
 - 3 a proximity key coupled to said cable storing information regarding the cable.
- 1 2. The system of claim 1 wherein the information stored by the key identifies the type of cable.
- 1 3. The system of claim 1 wherein the information stored by the key identifies the devices that can be connected by the cable.
- 1 4. The system of claim 1 wherein the proximity key is an integral part of the cable.
- 1 5. The system of claim 1 wherein the proximity key is removably coupled to the cable.
- 1 6. The system of claim 1 wherein data is stored in the key at the time of manufacture.
- 1 7. The system of claim 1 wherein data is stored in the key after the time of manufacture.
- 1 8. The system of claim 7 wherein data is stored in an EEPROM on the key.

1 9. The system of claim 1 further comprising a proximity key reader for reading the
2 information from the proximity key.

1 10. The system of claim 9 wherein a portable instrument contains the proximity key
2 reader.

1 11. The system of claim 9 wherein the proximity key reader is coupled to a network
2 device.

1 12. The system of claim 9 wherein the proximity key reader sends information read
2 from the proximity key to a control unit.

1 13. The system of claim 9 further comprising a signal indicating proper connection of
2 the cable.

1 14. The system of claim 13 wherein the signal is a visual signal.

1 15. The system of claim 14 wherein the visual signal is coupled to the proximity key.

1 16. The system of claim 14 wherein the visual signal is coupled to the proximity key
2 reader.

1 17. The system of claim 14 wherein the visual signal is coupled to the network device.

- 1 18. A method for managing cables comprising:
 - 2 receiving cable information from a proximity key coupled to a cable.
- 1 19. The method of claim 18 further comprising identifying the cable using the
 - 2 information received from the proximity key.
- 1 20. The method of claim 18 further comprising determining the proper connection of
 - 2 the cable to a network device based on the information received from the proximity key.
- 1 21. The method of claim 18 further comprising determining the proper connection of
 - 2 the opposite end of the cable to a network device based on the information received from
 - 3 the proximity key.
- 1 22. The method of claim 18 further comprising storing the information in a database.
- 1 23. The method of claim 18 further comprising initiating communication between the
 - 2 two ends of the cable based on the information received from the proximity key.
- 1 24. The method of claim 18 further comprising performing network documentation
 - 2 tasks based on the information received from the proximity key.

1 25. The method of claim 18 further comprising performing network configuration tasks
2 based on the information received from the proximity key.

1 26. A cabling system comprising:
2 means for receiving cable information from a proximity key coupled to a cable.

1 27. The system of claim 26 further comprising means for identifying the cable based
2 on the information received from the proximity key.

1 28. The system of claim 26 further comprising means for determining the proper
2 connection of the cable to a network device based on the information received from the
3 proximity key.

1 29. The system of claim 26 further comprising means for determining the proper
2 connection of the opposite end of the cable to a network device based on the information
3 received from the proximity key.

1 30. The system of claim 26 further comprising means for storing the information in a
2 database.

1 31. The system of claim 26 further comprising means for initiating communication
2 between the two ends of the cable based on the information received from the proximity
3 key.

1 32. The system of claim 26 further comprising means for performing network
2 documentation tasks based on the information received from the proximity key.

1 33. The system of claim 26 further comprising means for performing network
2 configuration tasks based on the information received from the proximity key.